

the SELWYN review

Creative Writing and Artwork from Selwyn House School



Volume Two 2006-2007

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Editorial

I can't remember whether or not a moratorium was called on Borat imitations, but they seem to have stopped. One more "Niice" or "I high five!" and... well, okay, perhaps it was more of a habit than active anti-intellectualism. After all, many students have pointed out that Sasha Baron Cohen holds a Master's Degree in History from Cambridge. Fortunately, there were other discussions in the media and in film during the 06/07 academic year that lent to perhaps more serious approaches to dealing with important issues—namely, global warming.

Another much-discussed film on campus, Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth*, also asks us to examine inconsistencies. Gore draws parallels between ludicrous tobacco ads of the fifties, and denials of global warming by politicians in the present day. His documentary evolved out of thirty years of environmental activism at both the grass roots and political levels. In the opening monologue of *An Inconvenient Truth*, Gore says:

You look at that river gently flowing by. You notice the leaves rustling with the wind. You hear the birds; you hear the tree frogs. In the distance you hear a cow. You feel the grass. The mud gives a little bit on the river bank. It's quiet; it's peaceful. And all of a sudden, it's a gear shift inside you. And it's like taking a deep breath and going, "Oh yeah, I forgot about this."

This year there has been a perceptible shift in focus to environmental themes in *the Selwyn review*. The works collected in our second edition (notably on 100% post-consumer recycled paper) are not self centered, though they are self conscious. Mindful of their world, the writers locate themselves in the very unsettling landscape of adolescence in the 21st century. Their voices—ranging in tone from solemn to joyous—reveal concern for our environment and our society. They depict nature's beauty and warn against destruction. Our students are aware of the legacies they inherit as members of a global community: the consequences of global warming, and the devastating effects of war. Our students don't flinch. They attempt to engage us meaningfully, and they ask us to listen. Writing and visual art, like film, are powerful media. Good creative work is grounded in solid education, well-developed skills and interesting ideas. We think you'll see evidence of those here.

Bounded Love

“But Father, where is the lamb for the burnt-offering?”

-Genesis 22

Without a word,
let alone a melodic chant,
I soar on the wings of belief in silence
lest reason pluck the feathers of my noble ideals.
Perched on the edge of the path of life
I dangle in between the two worlds:
the darkness and the light.

On the cold stone of the altar I lie
bound hand and foot awaiting
the promise of a saintly servant.
Shackled by martyrdom,
blinded by the flames of this stoic passion,
my heart gently floods with cradled memories of bliss.

I shut my eyes as the gleaming knife is raised
kissing the dust and worms of the earth that I will soon become.
Just as I feel the holy blade pressed
against my veined throat, a blast of wind blusters across the mountaintops.
For that moment, tyrants are feeble, liars are speechless
and villains rest their swords in grassy fields.
Perhaps it's the song of the heavenly birds welcoming
me to their kingdom above the clouds,
but I do not know. I open my eyes.

It is Father kneeling in prayer
weeping into my hair and stroking my face.
With the tear-soaked knife, Father releases us from emptiness
and we joyfully praise the angel of peace,
because we were taught
on that day, that some things cannot be sacrificed.
On that day, we learned
that Love is our God.

FIRST PLACE, FREE VERSE, GRADE 11

And Rowing

The whistling breeze dances gently about,
fading clouds frolick in the skies,
swaying waves roll across the basin,
a creaking dock beckons forth.

But this place
does not just host a small sea, and a fleet.
It guards the key to
many hours of exuberant existence
on a slender shell. Sounds of a peaceful seclusion
resonate across the façade of the water.

The snow and ice have just departed. The basin
fills like a bubbling bathtub and the springtide brings
a new season, a revival of rowing.
This haven is still fresh from its wintry dormancy;
the docks have not yet been painted by
local gulls. The pool has yet to be infected with
the weeds that make a swamp of its figure.

From this lonely bench, I sift through
many memories, my memories. From the
noteworthy regattas that were won and lost, to
the trivial tipping of boats and snapping of oars.
They compose the passion in the symphony of my mind.
Still, my zeal has yet to reach its crescendo.

On the horizon lies the end of the basin,
I stand and peer out into the distance.
My cruise with rowing has barely started;
it will continue until I reach the horizon.

My Time

What an upbringing
starting with that cemented prison-barred building
until then
and now soon to be then
my time is spent
at the castle of the village
an eyesore by comparison

There at the castle
i met many unique compatriots so odd
and pretty
like icy bear who will roar
if you make him
and seven-legged spider.
But you may think
that he has all eight
even i forget

And those obstacles
to obviate sirens who get along oh so
perfectly
or the tree that could snap
like a firework and release
after giving
much more than should be retired

But now comes a time when
i dwindle in a very tense time
and wonder how much yore
will affect what may come

THIRD PLACE, FREE VERSE, GRADE 11



The Bear, Nathaniel Blumer

Forgiveness

On the outside, I look like any other regular teenager. I am tall and skinny. My legs are long and they end at feet the size of a small submarine. My arms are long too, and I look more like a chimp than a human being. My hands are so large that I do not need baseball gloves to play baseball. As far as my face is concerned, it seems there is an ongoing war for its territory. The nose, which is getting bigger by the day, is in constant battle with the zits, over which will occupy more space on my face. It is a tie for the time being. I do not see a winner in the near future.

Lack of co-ordination and clumsiness complete the picture of awkwardness. I am at a stage of my life when only my mother considers me good-looking. But that is where all the similarity with my peers ends. I am not at war with the rest of the world. I am not mad at anyone and do not have bouts of depression. I am completely happy with life as it is, and I do not wish it were any different. My parents are not enemies. For me, even having an older brother is an asset. It is from him that I learn the most by avoiding the mistakes he has made. At the same time, I look up to him for the good things that he has done. It is from him that I have learned that forgiveness is the best revenge. It is thanks to him that I am so mature today.

The story that I will be telling you is a true one and happened quite some time ago, when I was only seven. My brother, Luka, and I were attending a different school at the time. Luka, then twelve, was and still is very vocal and opinionated, which I admit can be a little irritating sometimes. So, one day during a recess, he found himself involved in an altercation with twelve other boys. Twelve against one! Nothing can justify that.

His shirt was ripped and he was tied up. His shoes had been taken off his feet, filled with sand and thrown away from him. He was bruised all over, but what hurt more was the humiliation. He did not deserve that no matter what he had said. Luckily, the whole “event” was filmed and there was no denying that it had happened. School officials tried to downplay the whole incident by saying that “boys will be boys.” Because the attackers were not punished in any way, the school

was condoning such behavior. My parents never received an apology or satisfaction. It was a hard period for the whole family. Unhappy with how the problem was handled, we did not see any other option but to change schools.

We changed schools and went on with our lives. Bad times were behind us, or so we thought, but not for too long. This time, “only” three of the boys that beat up my brother egged our house. Unfortunately for them, they were recognized while fleeing the scene. Once their parents were informed, they had to write letters of apology. Our parents were not too upset this time and were satisfied with the apology. My brother and I, on the other hand, saw this as an attack on our dignity and started plotting revenge.

Retaliation occupied every single moment of our time away from school. We indulged in fantasies. We thought it would be nice to egg or spray paint their houses in return, or throw garbage or a Molotov cocktail on their front lawns, just to name a few ideas that we came up with. There was no end to our imagination. Many stupid ideas crossed our minds and were considered as revenge. Luckily, they never materialized.

An unfortunate event brought an end to our fantasies. Namely, one of the boys lost his father in a sudden and tragic death. Luka was so upset with this death that he could not stop thinking about it. He felt sorry for the boy and was ashamed for wanting to retaliate. Without our parents saying anything to him, he decided on his own to attend the funeral to show his respect. All of a sudden, revenge did not matter any more. It became much more important to let go of the bad feelings and forgive. By forgiving, he got rid of the toxic energy that was consuming him. It took lot of courage on Luka’s part to attend the funeral alone. His presence at the funeral was duly noted and appreciated. The boy admired his gesture and at the same time felt ashamed for his wrongdoings. By forgiving, Luka regained respect and accomplished more than he could have imagined.



Johnny Depp Pirate, Armando Cabba

Malmédie

The red mist surged through the cool of the air, brushing its Picasso on the sheet of sacred Malmédien white. Filling the blemishes of the land, hot crimson flowed free of the wound. As Lloyd James wheezed his last hampered breaths, his brows eased into a drifting calm tranquility, the clenching grit of his weary jaws unwound. His masterpiece, his Sistine Chapel, came to completion. A slumber of blue calm seized his anguish, transforming into blissful ecstasy.

The symphonies of fire filled the sky with music of the rarest kind. The MP 40s trumpeted with rich red fervor, while Kar-98Ks whistled in firm intensity, providing a chorus to the entrancing concerto. Fleps squeezed the trigger, and he too joined the enchanting spells of the symphony.

With it came a messenger: a brass quick pinhead, a silhouette of blinding gold speed. In its liberation, it tasted the sweet cold air and saw the world outside

the prison. It sensed elation, as
does a soaring phoenix whose great feathers
massage the wind. At end's meet, the muse's
deliverance collides with the soft flesh,
allowing for the fine art's greater good.

That day, many etched paintings marked
their place in the lands of Malmédie. As
the blissful music slowly came to a
halt, Private Fleps gazed back toward the
splendorous field of red. Grinning keenly
at Major Peiper, a rush of pride ran
all across his body. And although the
shivering, frail soldier begged for good
mercy, Fleps released the last of the
red mist gleefully into the worn snow.

FIRST PLACE, BLANK VERSE, GRADE 10

Fall Up

Animals thirst, even earth is afraid
of the Sun and its mysteries hidden
by its brightness, forbidden to the touch.
God of old, center of the universe,
cajoling us mischievously, smiling
while we wilt shamelessly at Kyoto.
Neurons dancing with no refrain. Without
D.N.A., blood only leaves a dark stain.

The heavens lurking just beyond the sky,
we are soaring towards oblivion.
Break free from our shackles so we can roam
the firmament, grow wings, and peek towards
eternity... back into tomorrow...
Glow in the shadows, dare to touch the earth,
it has fever. Let the pigeons give heed
to the politicians: left, right, center.

Fall up before the glaciers disappear.
Fall up before the only green we'll see
is corporate logos and shameless greed.
Fall up, our new creed, and let our fish breath.
Protect our trees, our water and our seas.
Fall up the earth has fever. Fall up now
before the music will have no lyrics,
before the rainbow dies and turns to white,
before our screams will end in sighs, nothing
left to kill or die, no one to fall up.
Touch the sky. Let's carry it for awhile.
Touch the present so we can have a past.
Fall up and touch. Fall up and dare. Fall up.

SECOND PLACE, BLANK VERSE, GRADE 10



Untitled, Christophe Rainville

The Ride of Your Life

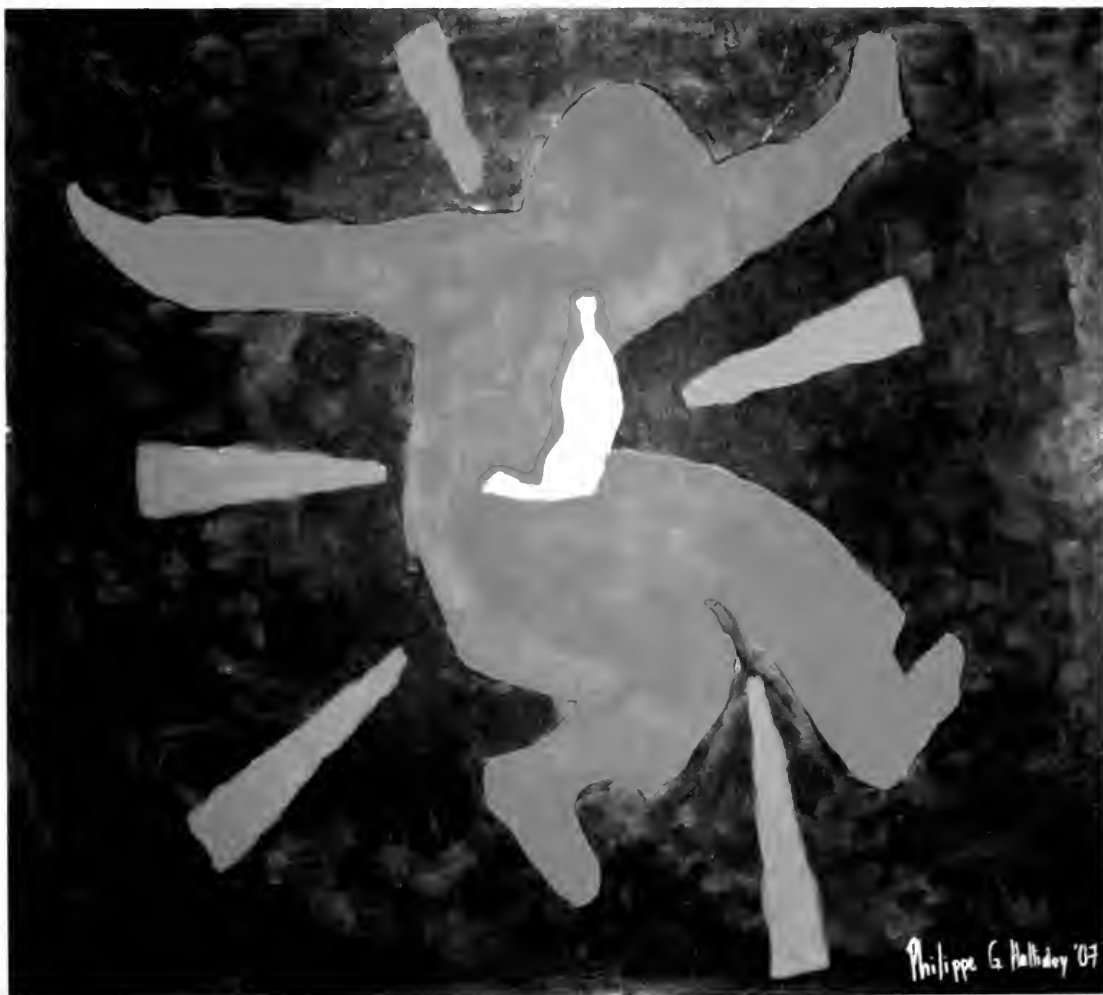
The time has finally arrived at last:
the time to set aside my last childhood
follies and achieve the way to the path
of adulthood. It is my gift, given
to me on the eve of my birth to ride,
and ride I shall to prove what I can do.
Now I go, out on the dangerous streets
where rampant metal beasts come racing by
and large tin behemoths threaten my life.
But I must face my fears of tragic death,
for, if not, I will remain the only
child in my vicinity who has not
challenged death and fortune at their own game.

Time slows down and senses weaken as I
mount my superior stallion of steel;
As I push the front pedal forward I
can see my memories flash before my
eyes and feel my childhood slipping away.

Though, as my velocity increases
and my excitement begins to grow strong,
I can feel the grip of fear begin to
loosen and the cradle of happiness
wrapping itself around my heart until,
without any notice, I am flung forth
from my seat and the pale illusion of
security is ripped away from me

and, as a result, I am forced to hit
a jagged surface of concrete and feel
a pain that I have never felt before.
As tears run down my face and blood gushes
From my knee, I learn the caustic truth that
adulthood is not as fun as it seems.

THIRD PLACE, BLANK VERSE, GRADE 10





Van Gogh, Leo Janusauskas

The Seconds Grow Longer

To what end do you make me wait? I can only grow more awkward in this uneasy abandonment. I am alone in this hall; every other soul seems to be anywhere but here. Left to my own devices, I watch the sluggish second hand on the overbearing clock make its way about an endless loop. The abrupt shot of each tick rings through the silence: staccato chaos. Between each reminder of uniform time, I lose myself in eternity. The seconds grow longer. The ticks seem few and far in between.

You summoned me. I await my punishment. And yet, you make me wait in the hall, for hours, it seems. My discomfort grows every time I look up and your door is still closed. Am I innocent? I do not even know for what fault you pursue me. How long have I waited? Even time has lost sense in this illogical reality.

After lunch, they caught up and said to me: "Go now."

These were my friends, but even they could offer no answers, no solace. Their frigid stares bore into my courage. They are strangers to me. Why do they turn on me now, in my time of need?

What have you done to them?

What have I done to you that you would turn them on me and hold me hostage in this place where I once walked free? I can recall the laughing innocent I was, only this morning. I had no worries, and the world was my playground. Now, lines crease my brow and I am at the mercy of your whims.

Why is your will to leave me stranded? What twisted pleasure do you gain with my discomfort? Can you see me as I sit in this hard-backed chair, spiraling into the black pit of madness; twisted by that incessant clock? Do you take pleasure my

torment? Do you watch me in my agony?

And if you are, do I even want to see you? If you can worry me so much with this solid oak door in between us, how would I fare in your presence? I am afraid.

But I cannot leave. What if you were to open the door and find me missing? You would think I had not heeded your call. You would not know of the hours I had spent outside your door, the lines in the wood ignited by my incessant stare. I tried to will that door open, but I could not succeed. You would not know of the effort spent in this fashion, nor the sweat dropped in breathless anticipation. It only seemed to grow as time went on. No, I cannot leave.

And so I sit here.

And so I wait.



Soapstone Vase, Kevin Auerbach

Michael Abramson

The Unknown

I run my hands over the smooth surface
I could slide the top off
And step into a world
That I have never seen before
Or see inside a shiny new car
To drive away from my problems
And be my final escape
Even better, maybe the space will grow
And I'll be able to hide away in the dark it provides
Maybe, just maybe
Anything but to slide the top off of that shiny box
And find another pair of nice new shoes
That could never let me run far enough

Oliver's Twist

Why am I doing this anyways? You'd think that there are worse feelings than having between your fingers a little wooden toothpick shorter than all the grinning faces about you, but there isn't. Their eyes are open wide with gladness and luck, but I see through them to that tiny sliver of pity. I pick up my almost-empty bowl, with the smallest of dregs of that disgusting yellowish substance they call soup still left around the edges. I get to my sore and tired feet and begin my march of death. It seems like the longest of journeys between me and his stern, annoyed-looking face. My arms feel too weak even to hold up the little wooden bowl in my hands. This is stupid; I'd rather be made fun of by my friends than this, so I turn back. I can't, he's pulling me in with those strange grey eyes and all of a sudden I'm right in front of him flapping my lips and the sound coming out, "please sir, can I have some more?" He stares at me, his grey eyes turn red from anger and his hand rises in the air. I flinch and try to protect my face. His expression softens and his eyes turn blue, "yes Oliver, yes you can have some more", and he dips the big round spoon in to the yellowish filth and lets it splatter into my expectant bowl. I turn around and grin at young faces filled with shock.

How Love Sends Us Away

She speaks to me; the gush of the words from
this bright angel has sent me aimlessly
to the white-upturned heavens. Everywhere
I go there's always something to remind
me of you. In the glorious night, we
fall on our backs and gaze at the lazy
puffing clouds. We stayed outside until two,
waiting for the light to come back and warm
our blushing faces. You asked what I was
thinking, and I said, you send me sailing
on the bosom of the air. Brave men tell
the truth, and what I say bestrides your love.
You hold your tongue, knowing silence will speak.
Closer we are, now, and forever will
be. We have traveled far, transported
to another place and time where our harms
can not touch us, and the winged messenger
of heaven protects us in our other-
worldly universe filled with our passion.
But the rapid is fading, and the rush
Once again becomes our unfortunate
reality. You speak to me goodbye.



Lions, William Fletcher

Canada is Not a Hotel: When Diversity Hits the Wall

Coming from a multi-ethnic background, I am a perfect example of the modern mix of peoples. Although my mother is Irish-Italian and my father is Greek-Egyptian, I am nonetheless a purebred Canadian. This phenomenon is deep-seated in the Canadian tradition. Since the beginning of our nation's history, peoples from every continent merge in Canada in the hope of finding a land of freedom and prosperity. Essential to a thriving meritocracy, a diverse population allows for a greater selection of skills. The variety of intellectual perspectives also enriches the democratic process as the awareness of global interests and concerns is broadened.

While we recognize that we have not always been open-minded to newly settled Canadians in the past, we have now rightfully made diversity one of our most valued priorities. Realizing that the aging population cannot be sustained by our low birth-rate, Canada is dependent on the mass arrival of immigrants in following decades. In the effort to enhance the multicultural appeal of Canada, however, we are challenging the essence of our own cultural principles. By being overly tolerant of the world's cultures we are in turn allowing for intolerance of our own core values. This paradox of tolerance for intolerance is the major obstacle that we face today.

Instead of valuing diversity as an end of itself, we should only welcome it when it coincides with our existing framework of fundamental principles. Rather than face the difficult task of formulating a unique Canadian identity, we settled on re-creating every world culture in our own nation. Starting in the educational system, an overemphasis on the promotion of distinct identity wholly overshadows the common beliefs shared by all citizens. As a result, we are all hyphenated Canadians divided along the lines of numerous sub-nationalities. This conscious encouragement of tribalization allows for the accommodation of even the most pernicious beliefs and practices in Canadian society. Although ideologically driven multiculturalists would be loathe to admit it, there are ultimately cases in which

certain customs, inimical to our fundamental principles, threaten to rupture the fabric of our nation.

An evident group in Canada that rejects assimilation is the Hasidic community. By wearing distinct clothing, living in specific areas and socializing only amongst themselves, the Hasids impose self-segregation in order to preserve their vulnerable culture. While this reclusive behaviour is harmful to Canadian society, their small population diminishes their impact. However, politically correct attitudes that stress cultural relativism allow for prejudice in the name of cultural tradition. The Hasidic community, which is well-known to support chauvinism, recently objected to the fact that the glass façade of YMCA in their Montreal neighbourhood allowed them to view the offensive sight of women exercising. More willing to appease religious extremists than defend feminist ideals, the YMCA agreed to replace the windows with tinted glass.

In another recent incident, the Montreal police department officially stated that, out of respect for this patriarchal society, female officers should not confront Hasidic men and should instead call for a male officer. This concession to anachronistic gender bias is the antithesis of our own social mores. If a cultural community is disturbed by the notion of gender equality, this cannot be imposed upon mainstream society in a vain effort to accommodate their prejudice. This pitiful example of male bigotry is not excusable simply by virtue of the fact that it is a cultural tradition.

Cultural customs also challenge conventional Canadian beliefs in the wearing of the Sikh kirpan at schools. It is a completely rational demand that students not carry weapons to school and this is scrupulously enforced. In the name of diversity, however, it becomes a whole different issue when the weapon bears religious or cultural significance. Because Canada supports freedom of religion as one of our founding principles, does that mean we have the freedom to do anything that is warranted by religion? Of course not. If that were the case, we would allow certain groups such as the Mormons to engage in polygamy. While the carrying of the ceremonial dagger is indeed a Sikh tradition and is not intended for violence, it does not change the fact that lethal weapons have no place in the classroom. Nevertheless, the Canadian Supreme Court ruled that the carrying of the kirpan is now a religious freedom and that any objection is “disrespectful to believers in the Sikh religion and does not take into account Canadian values based on multiculturalism.” By this logic, it is anyone’s right to bring weapons to school,

work, or airports as long as they can claim it is of religious significance to them. Those who object to it are roundly denounced as close-minded bigots. In another incident in Canada, Sikhs have refused to wear hard-hats while working at the Montreal port as these interfered with their turbans. According to the Sikh faith, the turban cannot be removed and no other head covering can be placed on top of it. Since the labour and criminal code requires everyone to wear protective head-gear, Sikhs have been denied work at the port. Although this seemed to be a plausible measure, some have called this act discriminatory and prejudiced. While work conditions may conflict with religious duty, it is a problem that pertains solely to the individual.

In a similar case in which foreign customs challenge our social norms, an Arab limousine driver in Montreal refused to wear the company uniform in the place of his traditional robes. He interpreted this policy as disrespect for his heritage and brought the company to court on the grounds of cultural discrimination. The disgruntled driver failed to grasp that because every driver, regardless of ethnicity or religion, is required to wear the same uniform, it is not a prejudicial attempt to single out his particular custom. Photo identification on driver's licenses is another instance of religion-neutral law applicable to all Canadians. Nonetheless, veiled Muslim women have brought this case to trial notwithstanding the fact that the objective of photo identification is to distinguish the individual's face. It is a privilege to obtain a driver's license, not a right, so if certain individuals are not willing to fulfill its requirements, for whatever reason, they should not be able to bypass universal procedure.

Above all, the most significant attempt to undermine Western principles in the name of multiculturalism is the movement to establish Sha'irah law. Since immigrants are encouraged to entirely recreate their cultural practices in Canada, the substantial Muslim community now demands their own judicial system based on the teachings of the Koran. However, this movement completely defies the autonomy of Canada. The most basic function of any institutionalized government is to establish, enforce and evaluate laws for all its citizens. When a segment of the population is governed by a separate legal body, however, the country ceases to exercise the essential centralized practices in order to be considered a sovereign nation. Inevitably, this leads to a tribal society. At the bare minimum, Canada should provide the same judicial governance over all its citizens. Furthermore, Sha'irah law contradicts the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms notably

concerning the social treatment of women. A devout Muslim man in Ontario recently pleaded for sympathy for murdering his wife as it was, he pleaded, his religious obligation as an honour killing. This extreme case of cultural relativism used as an excuse for a crime is a popular trend among radical Islamists. After all, a multicultural society such as our own insists that all cultural traditions, no matter how barbaric, should be respected.

In light of France's ban of religious clothing in public institutions, Britain's new programs designated towards cultural integration and Denmark's recent decision to outlaw the Burqa (the complete body covering worn by orthodox Muslim women), we are now witnessing the severe reversal of years of multicultural policy. Finally realizing that factionalism certainly leads to divergence, many nations are taking steps towards social unification. Yet Canada still does not see the urgency of addressing the issue. Multiculturalists such as novelist Yann Martel continue to praise Canada as "the greatest hotel on Earth" for bringing a microcosm of the international community within its borders. But is it a virtue to have a nation that is perceived as a temporary residence in which there is no long term interest or responsibility? The answer is no. Canada cannot be expected to make everyone's bed only to find the towels missing in morning. Hopefully, we will come to our senses before the situation further deteriorates to the point that race riots erupt such as in France.

The first move to mend the social schism is to instill a greater sense of national identity in order to unite all Canadians. Only when we can all associate as being foremost Canadian can we effectively work cooperatively towards our common goals. "We must cease," Gandhi said, "to be exclusive Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs, Parsis, Christians or Jews. Whilst we may staunchly adhere to our respective faiths, we must be Indians first and Indians last." In the same spirit, while Canadians should continue to respect the cultures of our immigrant populations, we should also recognize that we are intrinsically bonded by the greater national cause. As ethnic and racial antagonisms continue to divide the world, it is especially critical that Canada act as an example of how a highly diverse society remains united.



Self Portrait, Nicholas Wathier

Bruise Like a Peach

I throw like a girl. I'm bad at every sport I try to play. I also bruise like a peach. I am short, skinny, and French. As a result, I have been labeled 'weak' by my peers. However, I have learned from the animal shows on the Discovery Channel how to survive with this disadvantage: befriend the strong people. Personally, I believe the main thing that separates us from animals is the fact that we care for our weak. I will reinforce this point with stories from my life.

I live in Westmount, which, despite what you may have heard, is not a tough place. Because I was raised in this peaceful environment, I lack experience in fighting. I also go to a private boys' school, so occasionally there are little shoving matches, but nothing serious. However, I occasionally get involved, and I usually end up on the floor admitting defeat. Since I cannot be an alpha male, I have decided to gain the respect of the strong with my boundless charm. Now, if I ever get confronted at school, there is always someone nice enough to help me.

Since I also look weak, people are more inclined to fight me. When I was thirteen, I went to a friend's bar mitzvah, and his little sister was having her bat mitzvah at the same time. There was a foosball table so my friend Noah and I challenged two guys to a game. They were a year younger than us, but they won by a humiliating six points. Then my other friend Adam decided to come to the rescue. He isn't much of a physical presence, short and chubby, but he had mastered the game. He challenged them and said he would play alone against both of them. During this game, Noah kept making fun of them, and doing everything he could to disturb their concentration. It ended with Adam prevailing ten to three; they left embarrassed and infuriated. One of them came back a few minutes later, and he chose to express his disgust to me, rather than Noah who was taller.

He started to slap my face. At first I was stunned, but then reacted by grabbing his arms. There was a struggle and I threw him into a fence which broke. (Apparently, according to Noah, he pushed the attacker while I was holding him). A few adults came ready to scold me. They didn't care that he had started it, because I finished it. The adults saw me as the antagonist of the story because I had proven to be stronger. They warned me and they helped the person to his feet. I didn't care that the adults were angry with me because I had won the fight, and I

have friends who would help me in a fight.

I am lucky to always have had a safety net whenever I get into trouble. I find the closing monologue in the movie *Raging Bull* presents what happens when a person does not have a safety net as I do:

[...] Then it went downhill. It was you, Charlie. You was my brother, Charlie. You shoulda looked out for me a little bit. You shoulda taken care of me just a little bit so I wouldn't have to take them dives for the short end money... You don't understand! I coulda had class. I coulda been a contender. I coulda been somebody — instead of a bum, which is what I am. Let's face it. It was you, Charlie.

Whether it's a brother or a friend, it is psychologically important to have an ally. The one main fear that everyone shares is being alone. This can be understood by both adults and children. When I was five I was walking in the Toys R Us store with my mother and brother. I was busy looking at a toy and they had walked away. I started to look for them. After each aisle I passed the panic started to creep in. I started to feel scared. My eyes began to water, but I still couldn't find them. Finally, I decided to go ask a cashier for help, she used the speaker system and my mom came to get me. All my fears of abandonment dissipated as soon as I saw her.

In my fifteen years of life I have learned the importance of having family and friends that you can trust and rely on. A person's strength in character grows from a secure childhood. I have also begun to appreciate the importance of police, fire brigades, hospitals, charities, governments, and laws that make society a place where even someone like me can survive. I'm even becoming independent. My mom doesn't cut my meat for me any more. I also go the gym so that I can protect myself and not have to depend on others. I am indebted to all those who have helped shield me from harm in the absence of a peaceful solution.



Penguins, Jacob Peterson



Soapstone Bear, Gordon Paterson



Untitled, Mathew Holy

Business

Surprising how much time there is to think when one is waiting for another to arrive for his appointment. His name is Gregory Wilde, a friend from a long while back. I had known him vaguely through my university years; we'd had a few good talks, but not much more than that. I rather fancy the idea of catching up with him, talking about old times. But that wouldn't be professional. Still though, there were so many things that he hadn't told me! For starters, how nice his house is! And that he has a wife, and kids! A German shepherd, too! Who'd have thought that awkward old Greg would have ended up so well? I guess I'll have to ask his friends about him later. I'd ask him to his face, but, as I said, that wouldn't be professional. I'd be hard to recognise, anyways. He'd never have guessed what profession I ended up with. It's a job without stability because I have to go from house to house, even making some appointments on the streets or in stores. I prefer the house to house ones, really. Although I plan out every engagement with my clients far ahead of time, these give the illusion of real preparation.

Am I ashamed of my work? Well, of course. But today, that's not so surprising, is it? Lawyers, politicians, businessmen... all of them have their secrets, their lies, their guilty consciences. I took a different route than those classy jobs, preferring one more art-oriented. My mother would turn over in her grave if she knew what had become of her wonderful little boy. This wasn't where she'd pictured me in my mid-20's. She wanted me to be a doctor. You could say that my career has very little to do with those blokes. It has to do with precision. It has to do with shady people, and taking advantage of those who are too ignorant to be rich. It has to do with making headlines, yet never being famous. It has to do with that fragile line, that precarious balance. It has to do with life and death.

I looked at my watch, and adjusted my grip on the knife. Five minutes till his arrival. Time to get ready. I stepped over the motionless form of a German shepherd, neck twisted at what I could only describe as a very uncomfortable angle. Muffled snores came from the rooms upstairs: Greg's beautiful wife was not quite as angelic during sleep. The kids had been a slight problem. Honestly, parents need to keep better track of their kids, and turn off the television at a decent hour. No matter, though, they were sound asleep in a closet up the stairs. Another master-

piece, well planned, well executed. I crouched behind the front door, and waited.

Lawyers, politicians, businessmen... all of them have their secrets, their lies, their guilty consciences. I chose a different route than these classy jobs, a fork in the road that leads right back to cross theirs. My work involves getting rid of those men with their secrets and lies. For a fee, I even out that fragile line, that precarious balance between the rich and poor. And I'm the best at what I do.

I heard footsteps outside. The key turned in the lock, and I raised my knife. My client had just arrived for his appointment.

Am I ashamed of my work? Well, of course. But in today's world, that's not so surprising, is it?

Renewal

The snow outside is so unforgiving,
it has attacked my summer-ready soul.
Great streaks of light: Please save me from this cold!
My patience has run out. I must have spring--
great ball of light, peep through the clouds to cry,
for great green fields beg for a chance to breathe.
So please great sun heed to their desperate pleas,
so that these great bright flowers do not die.
These flowers do now breathe, song fills their hearts.
Like great big giants, new trees sprout green leaves.
The once-great snowman sits and melts and grieves.
But now, with this shifting time we have to part.
A spring and summer for flowers it's been
And now they return to their white coffin



Untitled, Alex Shiri

Crows

The morning was ordinary as ordinary mornings go. It was wet, yet not raining. It was the misty type of Monday one might experience after a weekend heavily laden with spring showers. He knew that the rain had dwindled to a lingering stop just a short time ago. The ground and the trees outside were still deadened by the weight of the water pressing down upon them, so that the caws of the distant crows could be heard echoing between the dripping of the gutters.

He had learned long ago to not only expect the loud brackish cawing that met each morning, but to bask in its familiarity. When he had lived in the city, the constant changing sounds of the masses had drowned out the crows, making each morning a new and fearful thing. He had gone to work each morning feeling tired and depressed. However, as soon as he moved back to the suburban neighborhood where he had spent most of his life, the reassuring resonance of the black birds brought order to his mornings.

This morning in particular felt no different from the other countless mornings he had risen to the sounds of morning, and the early newspaper. His ritual of reading the paper every morning was a small pleasure that he greedily hoarded. Yet in recent months, his small pleasure had left him with an inkling of darkness pulling at the back of his mind. Daily he was greeted by scenes of carnage and misery. It was as though to attract him towards their papers, they had started driving him away with shocking scenes.

He came home from work later that day, and turned on the television to find it blaring the same mind-numbing and shocking images across the screen as it he had read that morning. Three were dead and many wounded in a bombing accident. The world was at war with itself. As he fixed dinner, animals and humans were dying at unprecedented rates. The earth was dying as were its people. The steady click of his knife slicing through the vegetables reverberated around the room. All over the neighbourhood, people were doing the same. Life continued normally for many like him, all fixing their dinner. All sitting down in front of their televisions

to watch society slowly fall about them, their microwaved greens sending steaming tendrils into the air.

That night, they pushed the button. He was sleeping fitfully in his bed, dreaming of bodiless caws echoing out of the mist: shockwavesshockwaveshockwave shockwaves broke over his house, rolling heavily like the waves of the sea, incinerating him instantly. As he was plunged into the light death, there was no conscious recognition just a belated and sorrowful cry from a large black crow streaking across his dreams.

Bjorn Dawson

My Moment

There I lay, pierced by my kryptonite.
I gripped earth's weakened clammy dough
With a swipe, dug deep with all my might
wincing, crying, screaming as a piping crow.
Boots trudged by marking the bleeding mud
with their great guns geared towards the hunt.
Darkness surrounded lightened only by blood.
Mud splashed onto my pale faint front.
Constant ringing resonated through me,
Pain shot through me, releasing all my fears.

Shoulder my heart of woven human pains.
The bugle will not blow out over me.
Nobody knows, the blood within my veins
runs within that which caused my final journey.

FIRST PLACE, SONNET, GRADE NINE

Oliver Maurovich

Forgotten

Our hearts are vaults of all our memories
Each with a key that will not bend or break
They can be changed beyond all boundaries
But their true existence is no mistake

Whether you forget her face and name
Or the sweet and soothing sound of her voice
Her soul burns brightly inside all the same
And her protection is your heart's first choice

As I struggle to hold her image close
And to let her name roll off my tongue
I forget her, the one that mattered most
I lay speechless, breathless, air stripped from my lungs

I've been searching, thinking, lost and looking
While drifting through the chain of memories

SECOND PLACE, SONNET, GRADE NINE

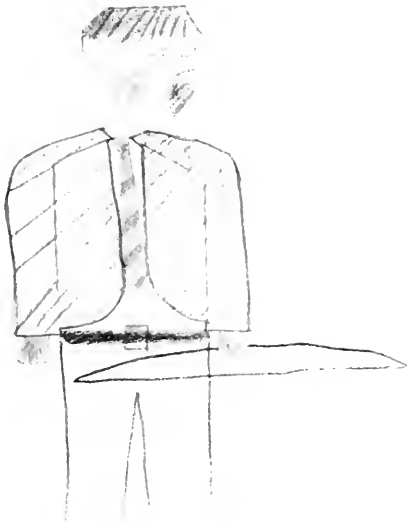
The Ashes

Like a Phoenix, rise from the Ashes--
one thousand years have passed you by,
and death looks downward into your old eye.
You cannot continue to go, or fly,
for, old bird, you are sentenced to die;
the flames around grow hungry, and tall.
Ash are you, by those very flames.
Death, in your last stand, your life it claims,
and the fire sends you to your last fall.

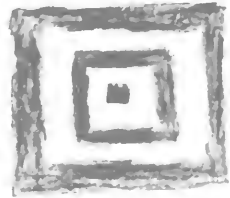
In Hell, you search, not one solemn abode,
not one humble place to call your home.
Reject this, your life's last tome.
Break from the shackles bestowed upon you.
Go, fly, young bird! You are not to die.
Another thousand years will pass you by.

THIRD PLACE, SONNET, GRADE NINE

Kyoto Protocol



Target



Kyoto Target, Karim Kaidbey

Opa

My German grandfather, Joseph Rosenthal, is a man I, unfortunately, never met. He was born in Siegbourg, Germany, a city near Cologne, August 16, 1902. Although he died ten years before I was born, his stories have been passed on to me by my father. My father used to tell me his stories before I would go to bed. My favourite story recounts the adventure of his walk from Siegbourg to Rome and back. To understand why he would undertake such a remarkable march, you must understand the German educational system at the time.

After eight years of public school, a German student had to choose a three-year apprenticeship. Opa--grandfather in German--decided to take an apprenticeship in Mechanical Engineering. After three years of apprenticeship, the apprentice is given the option to become a master. To do so, you must do something extraordinary, even if it has nothing to do with your chosen field. Opa spoke to two of his best friends and they decided that their extraordinary feat would be to walk from Siegbourg to Rome and back: a distance of approximately 1850 km one way. And so, Joseph Rosenthal, Christian and Alois set off for what would be the adventure of a life time filled with action, romance and, certainly, plenty of mischief.

The walk was to begin in 1925. Rome was chosen as the destination because in the Roman Catholic religion every 25 years there is a holy year, or year of Jubilation. 1925 was a holy year so Joseph and his two friends set off on a pilgrimage to Rome. Little did the three young voyagers know, but this walk would change their lives forever.

The morning their journey began, my Great Grandfather, Joseph's father, gave him a pair of hiking shoes that he had crafted himself. Looking his son in the eyes, he told his son, "Take these Joseph, for these shoes will bring you home." And so, the three young men set off on a quest with only two changes of clothes, extra shoes, blankets and a sense of optimism that they were about to do something extraordinary. They were treading in uncharted waters. They were thoroughly unprepared for the harsh and difficult terrain of the Alps, and had little to no money in their pockets. Joseph and his two friends decided that in order to make

money, they would stop at little farm houses along the way to ask for board. In exchange, they would work. Joseph, Christian, and Alois worked their way to Rome.

The countryside was breathtaking. Valleys of vast flowers and streams of glistening glacier water blessed their expedition nearly every day. They walked for another six weeks before they finally arrived in the industrial city of Augsburg. Augsburg was the largest city they had seen since their departure from Siegburg and they were ecstatic to finally be surrounded again by urban life. They stayed for four weeks because they figured they could find decent jobs and get paid more than in the small villages and farm houses. These young men soon became accustomed to this upbeat life style and decided to enjoy themselves.

They found a nice restaurant in the old part of the city. There was even a live band playing. To their overwhelming surprise, at the table in front of them, sat three very beautiful girls. Joseph was struck by one in particular, and felt compelled to make his presence known to her. He calmly walked over to the table, held out his hand, and asked the shy but beautiful girl to dance. They danced the night away. Joseph learned that his angel's name was Matilda. They were absolutely taken with each other and they began to see each other more frequently. Soon, this amorous feeling bloomed into love. However, this paradise did not last long. Joseph explained to Matilda that he had to leave and finish his expedition to Rome. He promised her that no matter how long his trip took him, he would come back for her. He promised that he would never forget her.

Numerous months came and went until, finally, they reached the Italian border. However, many troubled times still lay ahead. The Italian customs officer was not willing to accept their story about walking from Germany. He brought them into custody to interrogate them. After hours upon hours of heated debate between Joseph and the customs agent, they were finally sent free and on their way, although the officer's suspicion was never entirely relieved.

The language barrier also proved to be a terribly difficult obstacle to overcome. This language barrier took a great toll on Joseph and the others especially after they left Boltzano, Italy. A farmer, who allowed them to stay with him, said that the fastest way to Rome was through a vast forest; however, the directions he gave were unintelligible.

They arrived at the forest as night was falling. The night was spectacular; the moon was full and the stars were shining. Joseph, Christian and Alois decide to

profit from this beautiful night and walk right through, trying to decipher the old farmer's directions. They walked and walked and walked. They felt as though they had been walking for ages. When the sun finally rose, they realized that they were within about fifty meters of their starting point the previous night. Depressed and exhausted, they walked unenthusiastically through the rest of the forest, this time in the right direction.

They arrived in Venice about three weeks later, planning to stay in Venice for three days. They decided to take a gondola ride because that's the single thing someone must do in Venice. As their gondola ride came to an end, the gondolier asked for his pay. He realized that the three gentlemen were foreigners, so he decided to scam them. He insisted that the price they had to pay was an unconscionable amount. This ride cost them every cent of what they had left for the trip. They had to wander the streets like peddlers for days. Finally, someone offered them a job repairing boats. This job tested the skills of all three men. After about a week, they had enough money to continue on their pilgrimage.

They walked another week or so until they arrived in Florence. They stayed in a farm house just outside of Florence. This farm had its own winery. One evening, the farmer invited his three German guests to a night of drinking and festivities. They drank and laughed all night long, and in their drunken stupor, they decided to roam the city. The next morning, they woke up and realized that they had fallen asleep in the middle of the street. They turned to their bags, and to their dismay found that they had been robbed clean. Someone had taken all of their money. They were penniless once again. Deciding they couldn't waste any more time, they continued travelling even though they were poor, wet and filthy.

They reached another wood just after Florence and decided to sleep before tackling it the following morning. The night was fairly calm. While asleep, in the dead of night, they heard a noise. At first, they thought it was the man who robbed them two nights ago coming back for more. Then they thought it was a deer. The noise was far too deep for a deer. The creature began to charge at Alois. As it came nearer, they realized it was a wild boar. Alois attempted to run away, but after having walked all day, he exhaustedly stumbled around, and the boar's tusk cut his leg. Joseph and Christian devised a plan to get rid of the boar. Christian found a stick and pulled out his knife. He fashioned a sharp edge on the end of the stick. Joseph forced the boar to chase him around a tree. Christian came from behind, and stabbed the boar violently in the back. Critically wounded, it

scurried off. Alois' wound was not serious; he continued the journey.

Finally, after a long, beautiful and occasionally dangerous walk from Siegbourg, Joseph, Christian and Alois arrived in Rome. They stayed for two weeks utterly fascinated by everything. After two days of very well-deserved rest, the three voyagers made their way to the St. Peter's Basilica. They went over to the Swiss Guard to request an audience with the Pope, explaining their journey to him.

The Swiss Guard rejected their request. As they turned to leave, in exhausted dismay, a Vatican official introduced himself saying that he could not help overhearing their story. They were taken to the official's office and asked to wait as he pled their case to the Pope. Thirty minutes later, the official burst into the room. With a very broad smile he said, "The Pope will see you in half an hour." Thirty minutes passed. Suddenly, the Vatican official and two Swiss Guards came and escorted them into an enormous room.

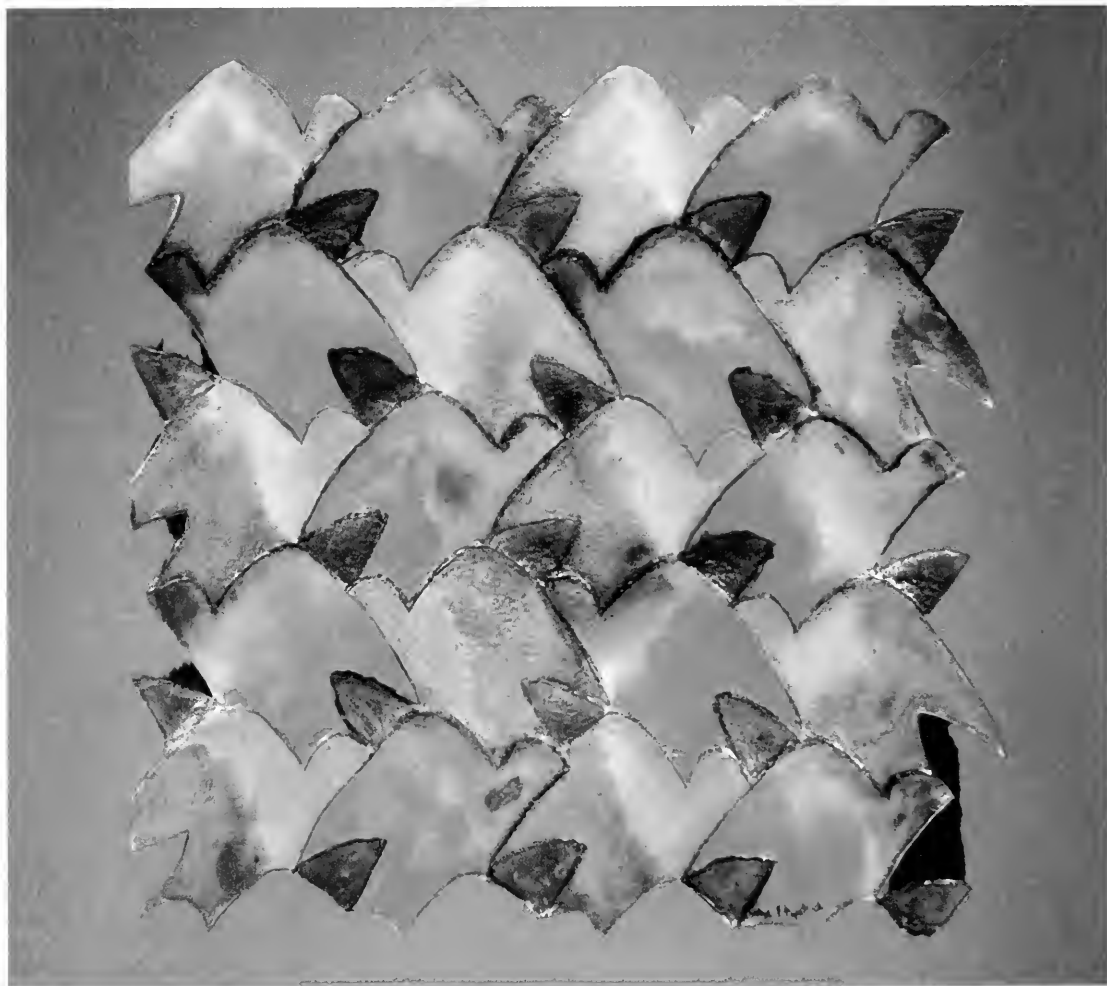
At the far end, Pope Pius XI sat in his throne. They knelt before His Holiness as he blessed them. They rose. The Pope said, in a soft, humble voice, "I hear you three have come all this way to me. For that, I thank you and may God bless your journey home." They left His Holiness. Each man was presented with a certificate declaring that he had been given a private audience with Pope Pius XI.

They began their voyage home a week later. This time, however, they knew what to expect and there was much less stress because their mission had been fulfilled.

After approximately two and a half months, Joseph arrived in Augsburg. He arranged to meet Matilda in the restaurant where he had said goodbye to her. Joseph fulfilled his promise to her and proposed marriage. However, the situation was complicated because Matilda had a boyfriend. This boyfriend was moving to the U.S. and had asked her to join him. It was in this instant that she realized that the man she truly loved was Joseph and nothing could change that.

Matilda and Joseph married and had two children. They settled in Augsburg, where my father and his sister were born. Joseph became an award-winning Master Engineer with a successful manufacturing company for furniture-making machinery. His factory was destroyed by American bombers during the Second World War.

Joseph, Christian and Alois remained lifelong friends, even though Christian and Alois settled in Siegbourg. Ironically, the three adventurers died within days of each other in the very same year, the week of Christmas in 1980.



Untitled, Robbie Fitzpatrick

Found Poem: Goodbye Lovers

Farewell! I am a dreamer, but when I wake
I will be married
Unless this poison, I doth take,
Lay me down, to be buried.

While I watch you lie there,
Oh Juliet, why art thou yet so fair?
Did I disappoint you?
Or let you down?

Arms, take your last embrace
I've kissed your lips and held your head
There is no fear in your face
When you shared your dreams, and your bed.

Goodbye my lover
Goodbye my friend

I shall take your soul into the night
With thy lovers' fight
Thus with a kiss I die
Thou shall swear not to cry.

The Bargain

It was not the first time that the idea crossed Anthony's mind. He could not recall exactly when the thought first occurred to him. However, he did remember that he became aware of it in high school, at about the same time he became aware of his hatred for school. It could be that the idea had always been with him, but was hidden somewhere. At first, it did not bother him that often. It would pop into his head, now and then. Then, the idea began frequenting his mind more often, and on a more regular basis. As time passed, it made so many entrees in his mind that it became a staple of his thinking.

Whether it had crept stealthily into his head, unbeknownst to him, or was lying there dormant was irrelevant and immaterial. What mattered most was that it was well alive and present in his mind, now more than ever. He could not fight it anymore. The pending math test was the latest reason Anthony became obsessed with the idea. He thought it was the appropriate time to act on it.

At supper time Anthony was sitting with his friend, Freckles, enjoying the last rays of the setting autumn sun. He felt good and wanted to share what was on his mind.

"I would give anything to be sick," Anthony said nonchalantly.

"What?" Freckles responded in shock. "Did I hear you well?" she asked.

"And, if I heard you well, I cannot understand how you could say something so stupid," she went on. "I wish I could understand, but I just cannot."

"I am sorry," Anthony said and looked at Freckles with his adolescent face. For the first time, she did not notice his zits and braces. She only saw his big blue eyes, thin lips and strong jaw. When he smiled at her, she smiled back at him. "This face could not be stupid," she thought. She was ready to listen to him.

"Let me explain what I meant," he said. "I don't feel like going to school!" Anthony said miserably. "I sense some very hard times in the upcoming math class, and I would do anything to avoid it. However, as an honest man, I cannot do it without a legitimate reason."

"I'd rather be healthy than sick. Why don't you just skip class, and forget

about your innate honesty?" asked Freckles.

"I will most probably end up doing that," sighed Anthony, "not because I want to, but because there is nothing wrong with me! I tried very hard, but I just cannot get sick."

"You cannot get sick?" asked Freckels incredulously.

"No, I can't! Imagine that," said Anthony. "Perseverance and strength will help you achieve anything you want! Sure."

"Please, don't try anymore. Stay just as you are! You can't even imagine how many people envy you at this moment. All those patients, young and old, stuck in hospitals, not to mention those still waiting in the ERs," retorted Freckels, passionately.

"They should not envy me. None of us has what he wants. Moreover, we all have exactly the opposite of what we want," answered Anthony.

"You've turned into such a philosopher just because you might get a failing mark in math?" asked Freckels.

"There's more to it," answered Anthony, calmly. "I have other reasons that are not math related."

"Like what? Problems with another class?" inquired Freckels.

"Don't be silly. I would love to be able to read a nice book, for example," said Anthony.

"And, you are unable to read when you are healthy?" Freckels wanted to know.

"Sure I can. But then I don't have the time. When the weather is nice they tell me: 'What are you doing inside, stuck between these four walls? Why don't you go and play outside?' Then again, when it is not nice, I am told to do my homework, prepare in advance for a test that has not been scheduled yet, or do some household chores! There is no time to read."

"Right, right," Freckels nodded. "I must admit, there is some sense in what you are saying!"

"Of course there is," continued Anthony, enthusiastically. "Don't forget the time spent in school. It is the best part of the day, but irretrievably gone! If I were sick, I would not have to go to school. I would not be allowed to! A sick man can quietly spend his time reading a book, or listening to music. If he is lucky and is blessed with a high fever and rather energetic cough, he might end up with a present or two from his worried parents," Anthony concluded.

“My God, you are right! I must admit, I never looked at it this way,” she agreed. “But then again, you make it sound as if being ill is just like being in heaven. We both know it is not. The worst part of an illness is being ill! You must admit to that!”

“You amaze me! I never said that it is perfect. There is no such thing. Have you ever seen a rose without thorns? Illness does have some disadvantages, but it also has some advantages. It is up to the ill person to find them and make the most of it. To be able to read, listen to music, receive gifts, play chess with his father, have a rest from school,...well what more do you want?” asked Anthony.

“I don’t know? If only one could have all that without the fever, without coughs and headaches, without hot tea, warm soup and antibiotics every six hours,” mused Freckels.

“No way!” replied Anthony. “Misfortunes strengthen and build character. We are at the age when character is being built. We have to get strong, both physically and spiritually. If we don’t, we will be weaklings, unable to confront life,” answered Anthony.

Freckels kept quiet. She was staring through Anthony as though he did not exist. Anthony, on the other hand, kept on talking.

“Besides,” he continued, “health will gain the necessary respect. A healthy person takes his health for granted; he does not notice it, and more importantly, does not appreciate it. On the other hand, a sick person knows well how important it is to be healthy. His attitude towards health comes naturally.

Freckels kept quiet for a while, and then she asked: “And how do you plan to get sick, Anthony?”

“Well... most probably, I will have to resort to the old-fashioned methods. This means I will have to walk in the rain and get soaking wet. Another possibility would be to go out on a windy day without a coat. Drinking icy cold water after a long run would also be a possibility. Something along these lines should work out. Anyhow, it won’t be anything spectacular. A good old cold will suffice. If I am lucky, I should be able to catch a flu.”

“I wish you all the luck,” Freckels said. “When you do catch this cold of yours, I hope you will not forget me, and what good friends we have been all this time.”

“Forget you? How can I ever forget you?” asked Anthony.

“What I mean is I hope you will not be stingy, and keep it all to yourself. I would like you to share and pass some of it to me.”

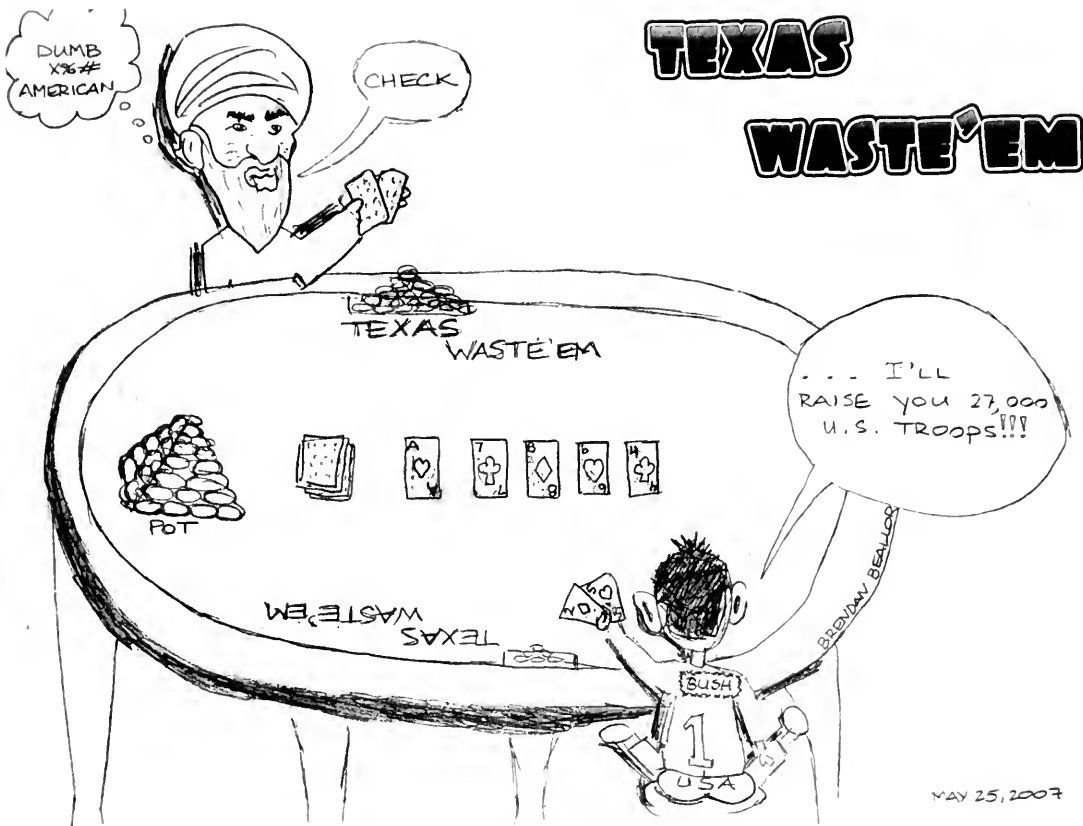
“I most certainly will,” replied Anthony, happy that Freckels accepted his approach.

Happy with the deal they made, they parted. Let’s just hope they do not get more than they bargained for.

The Storm

29/9/06

Rain comes down in sheets; the wind blasts away at the tent. This must be what it is to be caught in a hurricane. It sure felt like a hurricane. To stand on the beach and to gaze at the massive cloud bank that comes closer and closer, to feel the gusts of wind push you gently feels almost surreal. But then you see a wall; a big, gray, impenetrable wall of wind, rain and hail. You see your life pass before your eyes. Everyone is in a panic, the shelter of the tents beckons and ditches are made around them as fast as we can so no water can get under the tents. The French kids don't want to be here; they get in their tent and close it as fast as they can. I didn't bring my rain jacket, but instead use a tarp under my lifejacket like a cloak to keep my back dry. The rain is upon us, the tents are flying around. The fire is out in seconds; mayhem rules. We are desperately in search of rocks we can use to keep the tents down, but there are none we can see that are big enough; not like we can see 10 feet away anyway. The main force of the wind is upon us, with all its strength. To walk into the wind is flat out impossible. We hear massive cracks of lightening, and blasts of thunder above our heads, people jump up scared. We see lightning strikes on the other side of the lake, scarcely a kilometer from us. Suddenly, a big gust of wind gets under our makeshift tarp, lifting it up and the collected water collected on the tarp pours onto us, soaking everyone. Now the hail comes. We hear a shout; one of the French kids in the tent has been hit by an exceptionally large hail stone. There is pandemonium all around, but we can feel the storm decreasing. We are starting to feel very cold, especially me without a rain jacket. The wind blows less and less and we start to feel better. Thankfully, our counselors had the foresight to keep some wood dry under the tarp, but we don't dare move it for fear it will become wet before the storm has completely passed. The wall of rain has moved on and we all go out onto the beach and look out onto the lake. The huge cloud bank, black as night, has passed us, the occasional flash of lightning sticking out among the clouds. We look at each other incredulously. We are all silent for a minute, we thank our respective God we survived this storm. It has passed and we are all intact, despite the fact we are cold and wet; we feel ready for anything now.



Texas Waste 'Em, Brendan Beallor

CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Abramson was born here in Montreal on February 1, 1992. He enjoys traveling all over the world and having new experiences and tastes of life. He loves writing and uses it as a tool for self-expression.

Nicodemo Agostino leads an exciting, yet peaceful life. This hipster enjoys zombie flicks with a message (this among other exploitation films), the X-Men franchise, and the lifestyle of a hippy. He's also an up-and-coming artist? His creative and original style will surely take him far.

Bryan Altman is not an austere intellectual. He wrote a very nice poem.

Kevin Auerbach enjoys art, particularly sculpture. He is going into grade 11.

Nathaniel Blumer is an adaptive, resourceful creature generally found in the Western terrain of Montreal. Despite his pacifistic and reclusive nature, he loves engaging with large herds of people. He can primarily be spotted around sources of ice cream or other sugary goods. Approach with extreme caution: subject to smile.

Armando Cabba was born and raised in Montreal. He enjoys listening to music and going to concerts. He looks forward to the adventures that await him in Fine Arts at Dawson. As an artist he has told his critics: "I don't suffer from Insanity, I enjoy it."

Bjorn Dawson is now in grade 9, and has been at Selwyn since kindergarten. He was born in Montreal, and enjoys a wide variety of sports alongside his academic activities.

Ryan Egger is the inventor of many stories both young and bold. His current whereabouts are unknown, yet a trail of microwaveable dinners leads some to believe that he now calls the far north city of Montreal home.

Robbie Fitzpatrick loves all sports. He has an ongoing rivalry with Ian Levine that will probably continue as they begin grade 10.

Abhinav Gupta wrote the poem in this collection while experiencing difficulties in his life, the worst he's seen in the fourteen years of it. He was inspired by the lyrics in Johnny Cash's "Hurt": "If I could start again, I would find a way." Abhinav believes that humans are like phoenixes; they can rise from their ashes. In fact, he wonders whether it's that problem-solving characteristic that defines human beings.

Philppe Halliday is a nationally ranked skier, and going into Grade 11 next year.

Mathew Holy is entering Grade 11 next year. Unlike his colourful art work here, he is quiet.

Trevor Hooton worries that when he meets new people, they only pretend to like him because they feel bad for him. Then he makes them laugh, and it's all okay. He's lazy and unmotivated, but it doesn't seem to affect him too much.

Although it is only 2007, there is already talk of naming **Patrick Levy** Man of the Millennium. He is intelligent, good-humoured, sociable, romantic, compassionate, culturally refined and not too sore on the eyes either. Often seen lounging in the sun as supermodels feed him grapes, Mr. Levy's extravagant lifestyle is envied by all. While his awe-inspiring works never cease to amaze us, we continue to wait in suspense as the best of Patrick Levy has yet to be seen.

Geoff Matheson is a Selwyn lifer. He enjoys canoeing, hiking and slacking off. He prides himself on completing all assignments at the last available moment.

Oliver Maurovich can be found on basketball courts around Westmount and the West Island. When he's not shooting hoops, he fits in time to read and to write.

Gordon Paterson enjoys art, basketball and squash. He loves music and is a talented piano player.

Kevin Paul was born March 1, 1991 in Abbotsford, British Colombia. At the age of 7 he moved with his parents and two sisters to Montreal, Quebec. Kevin was raised with the average lifestyle of any young boy. He plays numerous sports and lives for fierce competition.

It's true **Andrej Pavlovic** is tall. He leaves Selwyn after nine years. He'll be at Dawson studying Science next year.

Jacob Peterson is going into Grade 10 next year.

Christopher Rainville is a provincially ranked skier. He never stops moving and is prone to loud, random outbursts.

Zach Rosenthal has been at Selwyn since kindergarten. This year he travelled to the Dominican Republic as part of a humanitarian aid group. Next year, he begins Dawson's Science program.

Chris Santillo has been going to Selwyn House School for seven years; he came to Selwyn in grade four. He was never really interested or any good at writing poetry, so he was very surprised that he came 3rd place in the Grade Ten Illustrated Poem competition. Chris enjoys the outdoors, football, soccer and summer days; he hates winter.

David Ta Kim can be found on skinny skis in winter and in skinny boats in spring. Next year you'll find him at Marianopolis.

Tristano Tenaglia eats; Tristano Tenaglia thinks; Tristano Tenaglia feels; Tristano Tenaglia writes.

Nicolas Vendeville is French. He garnered a small fan base when he participated in an on-line creative writing course in English this year. He hopes to continue writing and being published.

Nicholas Wathier quietly listens during class. Madame Jothy believes he'll really develop as an artist--he has a lot of talent.

Christopher Wong was born June 14th, 1991. Over recent years he has enjoyed the discovery of his interest in art, whether it be the English language, the music that runs through his headphones, or the music that vibrates through his guitar. Chris also aspires to one day reach his dreams of travelling all spots of the globe.

You may stop reading now:

You're done.

Michael Abramson
Nick Agostino
Bryan Altman
Kevin Auerbach
Brendan Beallor
Nathaniel Blumer
Derek Burrows
Armando Cabba
Bjorn Dawson
Ryan Egger
Robbie Fitzpatrick
William Fletcher
Abhinav Gupta
Philippe Halliday
Mathew Holy
Trevor Hooton
Leo Janusauskas
Karim Kaidbey
Patrick Levy
Geoff Matheson
Oliver Maurovich
Gordon Paterson
Kevin Paul
Andrej Pavlovic
Jacob Peterson
Christophe Rainville
Zach Rosenthal
Christopher Santillo
Alex Shiri
David Ta Kim
Tristano Tenaglia
Nicolas Vendeville
Nicholas Wathier
Chris Wong